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Dervish

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Beginning around the twelfth century, a distinct movement of itinerant antinomian dervishes evolved in the Muslim world as a form of religious and social protest. By deliberately embracing a variety of unconventional and socially liminal practices, they inverted social hierarchies and explicitly violated Islamic law. Their peripatetic lifestyle and voluntary acts of material divestment, such as living on the streets, sleeping on the ground or sheltering in graveyards, suggested a descent to animal levels of poverty. Those who chose this particular antinomian mode of life and the associated bodily, social, and spiritual disciplines, were often distinguished by bare feet, garments of animal skins, even dirt-caked nakedness, features which served as markers of wild social transcendence. By thus rejecting the demands of society on their minds and bodies, deviant dervishes remained entirely outside the normal social world. This distinct marginal space also served as an experimental theatre for testing and blurring boundaries between humans and other forms of being. Their peripatetic lifestyle and voluntary acts of material divestment mirrored the harsh living conditions of wild animals. The symbolic appropriation of animals and control over them was, therefore, of considerable importance. This paper pays particular attention to the associated vocabulary of antinomian existence in which animals play a pivotal role as agents of transformation. The concomitant display of animal attributes reflects the dervishes' own animal-like force. It acts not only as a means of liberation and a critique of social controls, but, above all, it serves as a prime tool in the dramatic attempts to discipline, control and tame their own "animal souls".

Islam, Sufism, antinomianism, religious mendicancy, celibacy, itinerancy, self-mortification, liminality, animal soul, animal hides and fleece, Qalandars, Ḥaydaris, Abdāls of Rūm, Jāmīs, Bektāshīs, Jalālīs

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> The abject confronts us, on the one hand, with those fragile states where man strays on the territories of *animal.*
> Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*

Introduction

"A Dervish is covered with a thousand and one signs that give occasion to a thousand and one questions. He who shall be capable of answering them all must be master of the science of mysticism and an ocean of knowledge…". So said the eleventh/seventeenth-century globe-trotter, Ewliyā Čelebī (d. 1095/1684)[1] in his travelogue of Ottoman Turkey.[2] These words of caution are particularly relevant for those dervishes who chose antinomian forms of asceticism and Ṣūfīsm.[3] They were remarkable for their unconventional outward appearance in a society with strict regulations on the body and in which self-presentation functioned as a marker of identity. By systematically and deliberately embracing a variety of radical, instantly recognisable and socially liminal practices that were regarded as reprehensible by the majority of the population, these dervishes explored the border regions of social and natural orders. Such "fools for God" (*muwallah*) chose degradation and life on the margins of society as their preferred spiritual path. This rejection and challenge of prevailing Islamic social norms was expressed in physical terms, through the outer manifestation of the body and

1 Where specific dates pertaining to the Islamic realm are referenced, both Islamic (*hijrī*) and Christian (Gregorian) dates will be given, the Islamic date appearing first.

2 Ewliyā Čelebī, *Siyāḥat-nāme*, English trans. von Hammer-Purgstall, 1827–1835, pp. 98 f. The fifth/eleventh-century spiritual master Anṣārī had already warned against reliance on externals: "The cloak of the dervish is indeed most precious, but who is truly worthy of it?" Kh^{w}āja 'Abd-Allāh Anṣārī, *Sukhanān-i Pīr-i Herāt*, ed. M.J. Sharī'at, Tehran, 1361/1982, p. 70, cited after Algar, "Darvīš, ii. In the Islamic Period" *EIr*, pp. 73–76.

3 Cf. Dols 1992, pp. 13, 374–410; Winter 2007, p. 25.

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through the inhabitation of physical spaces as well as through practices that explicitly violated Islamic law. The clothes they wore, the manipulation of their hair and mortification of their bodies, their personal paraphernalia as well as their interaction with the surrounding environments, all reflect a richly articulated vocabulary of antinomian, nonconformist existence.[4] Designating the external (dis)guise as a reflection of the inner disposition, the dervishes used their bodies as a sign to mark the difference between the "self" and the "other".

Those who chose this particular *anti*-nomian ("*against* the law") mode of life, and the associated bodily, social and spiritual disciplines, were often distinguished by bare feet, garments of animal skins, even dirt-caked nakedness, features which serve as symbols of wild social transcendence. Then, as now, such features of appearance were interpreted as indicators of ascetic training and divine madness, mendicancy and homelessness, libertine and antinomian freedom, animal power and radical renunciation including the rejection of marriage. Playing with signs that mark off the bounds of the civilised, or even the human, these dervishes carefully preserved their separate identities by inviting association with the world of animals and animalism, of hybrid species and miraculous creatures.[5] Identified as dervish (*darwīsh*, "pauper, beggar") and sometimes as *qalandar* ("uncouth"), these ritual mendicants were often difficult to distinguish from regular beggars or destitutes.[6] An early example of such an itinerant mendicant is recorded during the reign of the Ghaznawid ruler Muʿizz al-Dawla Khusraw Shāh (r. 547/1152–555/1160). It is said that a bizarre-looking ascetic of the *qalandar* type hung around the palace in Ghazna in eastern Afghanistan to ask for a substantial amount of money for his sustenance – failing which the king would be deposed.[7] Once the man received the money and the blessings of the ruler he disappeared again. He had bare feet and went almost naked, donning a black goat's skin with its pelt turned outwards as his sole garment. On his head he wore a cap of the same

4 Algar, "Darvīš, ii. In the Islamic Period" *EIr*, pp. 73–76.

5 Concomitantly it is worthy of note that in Islam a remarkable proximity between demonic beings and animals can be observed; Islamic demonology, as Julius Wellhausen (1887, p. 151) succinctly notes, is at the same time zoology. Cf. Henninger 1963, p. 300.

6 On the uncertain etymology of the word *darwīsh*, see Algar, "Begging, ii. In Sufi Literature and Practice", *EIr.* For a recent discussion of the origin of the term *qalandar* and the attempt to relate it to a location, see Shafīʿī Kadkanī, Muḥammad Riżā, 1386/2007, *Qalandariyya dar taʾrīkh*, Tehran: Sukhan, 1386/2007, pp. 36–49, in Ridgeon 2010, p. 239 n. 8, and Karamustafa 2015, p. 108.

7 In Ṣūfī writings dervishhood and kingship were variously contrasted as opposite poles of the human condition. This is echoed by the Persian poet Saʿdī (d. 690/1291–2), who says "Were they [the dervishes] to desire kingship, /they could plunder the realm of all kings". Saʿdī, *Qaṣāʾid wa ghāzalīyāt-i ʿirfānī*, ed. M.-ʿA. Forūghī, Tehran, 1342/1963, pp. 112–113, cited after Algar, "Darvīš," *EIr.*

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pelt together with the goat's horns (*sarūnhā*). In his hand he carried a club adorned with rings and pierced knuckles, as well as bells (*jalājil*) of different sizes.[8]

Over one hundred years later a larger number of such wandering antinomians emerged as the extreme end of a spectrum of anti-conventional "mystical" behaviour, often carrying paraphernalia such as a gnarled staff (*manteshā* or *ʿaṣā*), an alms-cup (*kashkūl*), a trumpet made from the horn of an ibex or a deer (*nafīr* or *būg*) and an animal skin (*pūst*). They emerged as a distinct movement concerned with renunciatory piety in the Muslim world which developed as a reaction against the gradual institutionalisation of Ṣūfīsm.[9]

1. *Qalandarī*-inspired "social wilderness", potent animal symbols and metempsychosis

One prominent representative of this form of religious and social critique was Baraq Bābā (d. 707/1307–8), a Turkmen dervish from Tokat in central Anatolia, who scandalised onlookers with his strange appearance and outlandish behaviour. His chin was shaved but he had long hair and an oversize moustache and his upper incisor had intentionally been broken off.[10] He wore only a red-coloured loincloth and a kind of felt turban to which bovine horns were attached. Around his neck he bore a rope with henna-dyed bovine teeth and bells.

Animal hides and fleece, bones, horns, claws, teeth and fangs were symbols of the animal world that represented the essences of the beasts. Just like the unnamed dervish in eastern Afghanistan who wore caprid horns, Baraq wore bovine horns and teeth. This presumably served to identify him symbolically with the essence of the animal, thus allowing him to appropriate its formidable qualities. The wearing of the most potent physical symbol, the skin or hide of an animal with the fur turned outwards, most likely engendered an innate force in the wearer and also celebrated the symbolic subjugation of the animal world, the power to tame "beastliness" and to control the forces of the animal. These items stood as an assertion of mastery not only over the animal from which they were stripped but also as a demonstration of the dervishes sharing their habitat with the territories of these animals. This peculiar and unlawful relationship with animals reflected their own dangerous, disruptive force vis-à-vis social norms. At the same time, and this is important to note, by carrying on the back a symbol of the divestment of his own

8 Muḥammad ibn Manṣur Mubārakshāh, known as Fakhr-i Mudabbir, *Ādāb al-ḥarb wa al-shajāʿah*, ed. Aḥmad Suhaylī Khwānsārī, Tehran, 1346, pp. 446–447, cited after Meier 1976, p. 511 and n. 250. Cf. Karamustafa [1994] 2006, p. 1.

9 Meier 1976, pp. 494–516; Karamustafa 2015, p. 123.

10 Meier 1976, p. 511.

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animal self, the *qalandar*, according to the *Futuwwat-nāma-i sultanī*, emptied his own skin of its animality.[11]

As well as bearing the pelts and attributes of animals, most *qalandar*s completely shaved off their own hair; they engaged in the ritual fourfold tonsure, known as the *chāhar ḍarb* in later times (literally the "four blows") – that is, the hair, beard, moustache and eyebrows.[12] In a society that regarded the grooming of facial hair, and especially of the beard, as a necessary marker of an adult Muslim male,[13] the loss of hair signified the loss of honour. The deviant dervish's shaving of the beard and other facial and bodily hair implied the rejection of his social position and an erasure of signs of civilisation from the face. Such practices originated with the purported founder of the antinomian movement generally known as Qalandariyya, Jamāl al-Dīn Sāwī (or Sāwaji, d. c. 630/1232–3), from Sāwa in Iran.[14] Known as the Pīr-i Abdāl,[15] Sāwī's outward appearance reflected the ideals of complete denudation (with only some foliage covering his private parts), separation from social living (*tajrīd*), absolute poverty (*faqr*), theophany or self-disclosure (*tajalli*),[16] and self-annulment (*fanā'*). While praying to God his hair is said to have miraculously fallen off[17] and, like his master Jalāl al-Dīn Darguzīnī, he subsisted on a diet of wild herbs,[18] thus associating him with the most desperately humbled poor. After a while he is joined by more and more followers (sg. *jawlaq* or *jawlaqī*, pl. *juwāliq*, "coarse wool"). Following the example of Darguzīnī, Sāwī escaped the clutches of the living by dwelling in total isolation in the Bāb al-Ṣaghīr cemetery in Damascus and during the last years of

11 *Futuwwat-nāma-i sultanī*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥosayn Zarrīnkūb, Tehran, n. 209–215, pp. 41 f., cited after Tortel 2009, p. 86.

12 This practice may have been influenced by the Buddhist ascetic tradition which likewise involves the removal of head and facial hair, see Yazıcı, "Ḳalandariyya," *EI*^{2}. Consulted online on 26 September 2016.

13 On aspects of Islamic legal thought regarding human facial and body hair, see Reinhart, "Sha'r," *EI*^{2}. Consulted online on 26 September 2016. On the symbolism of hair among the Persian *qalandars*, see Ridgeon 2010, pp. 233–263; in Islamic societies, see Pfluger-Schindlbeck 2006, pp. 72–88; and in South Asian societies, see Olivelle 1998, pp. 11–49.

14 Since the Qalandariyya is mostly known through heresiologies denouncing it (Ocak 1989, p. 30), this movement's theological groundings remain difficult to ascertain.

15 Tortel 2009, p. 198.

16 According to the forty-fourth chapter of *Futūḥāt al-Makkīyya* devoted to "the fools and their master in folly", the madness of buffoons and holy fools is seen as "a divine revelation (*tajallin*) in their hearts. This abrupt emergence of the truth takes away their understanding ('*aqūl*), being absorbed in God. 'They possess understanding without reason!'" Muḥyi 'l-Dīn Ibn al-'Arabī, *Futūḥāt al-Makkīyya*, ed. Uthman Yaḥyā and Ibrahim Madkour, vol. iv, Cairo, 1975, p. 87, cited after Dols 1992, pp. 408 f.

17 Meier 1976, p. 504.

18 Tortel 2009, p. 198.

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his life in a cemetery in Damietta (Dimyāṭ) in Egypt.[19] Living a life surrounded by death in a place of death, he personified the *ḥadīth* (tradition attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad), which calls for one "to die before dying to the world" (*mūtū qabla an tamūtū*).[20] The removal of the hair thus held multiple significations, including the removal of the veils between the self and God, the taking on of a resemblance to a cadaver[21] and asceticism insofar as a bare head constituted a form of exposure to the elements.[22] Another story about Sāwī describes how he passed on the leadership to Muḥammad Balkhī and commended him to dress the dervishes in black and white *jawāliq*s out of sheepskins. Keeping the black one for himself, Sāwī gave the white skin to his master Darguzīnī; black representing the colour of mourning, white the colour of spiritual realisation and beatitude.[23]

An extreme version of *qalandarī* piety is represented by the Ḥaydariyya brotherhood, which took shape in Iran as a result of the activities of the eponymous late sixth/twelfth-century 'founder', Qutb al-Dīn Ḥaydar (d. after 618/1221). As a young boy, Ḥaydar climbs a mountain in a special state and fails to return. Years later he was discovered by a traveller who saw him clothed in a dress made of leaves, completely merged with nature and drinking the milk of a gazelle.[24] Qutb al-Dīn's fame and influence rested on his dramatic attempts to dis-

19 Wāḥidī, ed. Karamustafa, pp. 95–97.

20 Concomitantly this context implies a marginal legal status. On *mūtū qabla an tamūtū,* see ʿAlī Akbar Dihkhudā, *Kitāb-i amthāl wa ḥikam*, 4, Tehran, 1960, p. 1753; Badīʿ al-Zamān Furūzānfar, *Aḥādīth-i Mathnawī*, Tehran, 1361/1982, p. 116, no. 353; Karamustafa [1994] 2006, pp. 21, 41; and Ritter 1955, p. 583. In the same vein, the button on the Bektāshī cap symbolises a "human head", since the Bektāshīs are often glossed as "the beheaded dead people" (*ser burīde murde*), cf. Karamustafa 1993b, p. 124. For a discussion of the motif of the beheaded saint, see Ernst 2006, pp. 328–341; on the demonic and divine power to present oneself in the form of a headless but living trunk in Buddhist mythology and iconography, see also Coomaraswamy 1944, pp. 215–217.

21 Meier 1976, p. 504. Shaving of the hair of the face and head, among the pre-Islamic Turks, was the mark of mourning, see idem, p. 503.

22 "Their scalps are always clean-shaven and well-rubbed with oil as a precaution against the cold". Menavino, *Trattato*, pp. 79–83; German trans. Müller, 36 *b*–37 *b* (n. 7), cited after Karamustafa 1993a, p. 19. Cf. Tortel 2009, pp. 208 f.

23 The versified hagiography composed by Khatīb-i Fārisī (d. after 748/1347–8) records a story accounting for how Sāwī acquired the skins. He sent one of his disciples, Muḥammad Balkhī, to a young man to collect a deposit the man had been entrusted with. It consisted of a whetstone and a seal wrapped in a frock. He then sent Balkhī to Baalbek to beg for sheepskins out of which he made the two *jawāliq*s. Khatīb-i Fārisī, *Manāqib-i Jamāl al-Dīn-i Sāwī*, ed. Yazıcı, v. 1172, 1094, 1110, cited after Tortel 2009, p. 199. Cf. Wāḥidī, ed. Karamustafa, p. 96.

24 The description is based on an account of Ḥaydar's conversion to asceticism by Ḥamīd Qalandar, *Khayr al-majālis* (comp. after 754/1353), with reference to a story of

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cipline, control and tame his lower self, the animal-spirit soul (*al-nafs al-ḥayawānī*).[25] The miraculous feats most celebrated by posterity were his immersion in ice water during winter and passing through fire in the summer. This propensity for torturing the flesh involved numerous ascetic practices, such as the use of various iron implements in a form of ritual self-laceration and self-mortification. This involved body piercing (later known as *darḥ al-ṣilāḥ*) on various parts of the body, including the genitalia, in order to suspend iron rings to ensure sexual abstinence.[26]

In contrast to most of the other *qalandar*s, the Ḥaydarīs shaved their heads but kept their moustaches long, as did the above-mentioned Baraq. In this they followed the example of the Prophet Muḥammad's cousin and son-in-law ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/661) who, according to the Ḥaydarīs, never shaved or trimmed his moustache,[27] a practice which stood in contrast to Islamic norms. Baraq also possessed the power of charming animals, including wild and dangerous beasts. When he first came into the presence of Ghāzān Khān, the ruler of the Mongol Empire's Ilkhanate division (r. 694/1295–713/1304), in Tabrīz, a wild tiger (or, according to some accounts, a lion) was unleashed on him to test his supernatural powers, but Baraq like many mystics could communicate with animals and a shout from him was enough to subdue the wild beast and allow him to mount it "like a horse".[28] On another occasion, Jamāl al-Dīn Āqqūsh al-Afram, the *amīr* of Sultan al-Malik al-Nāṣir in Damascus, tested Baraq by confronting him with a wild ostrich. Baraq climbed atop the bird and it served him as a mount. The ostrich carried him through the air and, "while still in the air [he] cried down to Afram, asking him if he should fly more".[29] This subjugation of wild animals was used by Baraq to show his thaumaturgical powers, his control over celestial and terrestrial forces.

Shaykh Naṣīr al-Dīn Maḥmūd Chirāgh-i Dihlī (d. 757/1356); see Karamustafa [1994] 2006, pp. 19, 45. The motif of gazelle milk appears also in the *qiṣaṣ* ("tales") of al-Kisāʾī (English trans. Thackston 1978, p. 324) which record that when the prophet Yūnus (Jonah) was cast out of the mouth of the fish God sent a gazelle to give milk to him "as a mother does to her child".

25 On the soul (*nafs*), see Calverley and Netton, "Nafs," *EI*^{2} (consulted online on 26 September 2016).

26 The sixteenth-century French geographer Nicolas de Nicolay (1517–1583), who followed Gabriel d'Aramon, envoy and ambassador to the court of Suleiman the Magnificent in the mid-sixteenth-century, observed that these dervishes "wear a big and heavy iron ring on their genitals in order to prevent them from having sex with anyone". De Nicolay 1989, p. 182.

27 Karamustafa [1994] 2006, pp. 62–63.

28 Ocak 1989, p. 106. Algar, "Barāq Bābā," *EIr.* For similar examples in the *Baṭṭāl-nāma*, see Dedes 1996, pp. 156, 164.

29 Karamustafa 1999, p. 195; cf. Ocak 1989, p. 31; Algar, "Barāq Bābā," *EIr.*

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Baraq's disciples were of a similar appearance as their master. They carried long clubs, bugle-horns and percussion instruments, such as tambourines and drums, to the accompaniment of which he would dance in imitation of the movements of apes and bears, emitting animal sounds as he went.[30] The staging of this kind of public performance was instrumental to the construction of the social self. The shocking and awesome nature of the animalistic demeanour only served to enhance its effect on the public that witnessed these spectacles. With their use of horned caps and the skins of wild or domesticated animals, these pantomimic dances and the related mimicry of animal postures and sounds were an expression of the identification with the non-human world associated with a symbolical transformation into an animal.

At the same time, Baraq's "singing" and "dancing" was not a simple simulation of animal behaviour and sounds but a means to induce ecstasy. Once this state had been achieved, it is indeed likely that he uttered sounds which may have sounded like those of animals. Baraq's ecstatic dance may well have been accompanied by the use of intoxicants which among the *qalandar*s were often used as an instant path to God. Indeed, his dervishes were renowned for their antinomian ways, which included the consumption of hallucinogenic drugs.[31]

Figures such as Baraq Bābā often came from the frontiers of western Iran, and especially from the areas of Transoxania, Khurasan[32] and Asia Minor.[33] In later years, successive waves of itinerant antinomian dervishes emerged from North Africa to India, adopting unconventional heterogeneous lifestyles as a form of radical socio-religious critique.[34] The boundary regions in which such individuals

30 Roux 1984, p. 70.; *Kitāb-i Abū-Muslim*, French trans. Mélikoff, p. 40; and *eadem* 1998, pp. 11–13; Ibn Ḥajar ʿAsqalānī, *al-Durar al-kāmina fī aʿyān al-miʾa al-ṯāmina*, ed. M.S. Jādd-al-Ḥaqq, Cairo, 1385/1966, vol. 2, p. 6, cited after Algar, "Barāq Bābā," *EIr.* Ocak 1989, p. 109. Karamustafa [1994] 2006, pp. 62–63.

31 Rosenthal 1971, pp. 69–71. A popular genre of painting represented gatherings of *qalandars* preparing, smoking and drinking intoxicants, such as cannabis and *bhang* (hashish). An good example is provided by an early eighteenth-century copy of an earlier "painting which is in the treasury of the palace at Delhi" executed by Mīr Muḥammad at the request of the Italian Niccolao Manucci (1639–1717) who worked at the Mughal court; the renunciation of the dervishes is reflected by the fact that they shaved their heads and were naked or nearly so and, like Indian yogis, smeared their bodies with ashes, their activities include mixing the substances in bowls, straining the brew with cloth, tasting it and so forth. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Od. 45, Rés. Manucci 1907–08, vol. IV, pl. XLIV, p. 183.

32 Bonner 2006, pp. 112–114.

33 For a discussion of the frontier setting in early Ottoman Anatolia, see Lindner 1983, pp. 1–10, esp. pp. 24 f. The concept of the frontier, frontier societies and distant centres of power has been the subject of Burns 1989, pp. 307–330.

34 For an in-depth discussion of mendicant dervishes from their beginnings until the

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subsisted constituted a refuge for political or religious dissidents, as well as for wandering bands of soldiers of fortune that provided the core population of this frontier society.[35] In addition, the vast social and demographic dislocations and disruptions resulting from the Mongol invasion in the seventh/thirteenth century encouraged the further spread of the spectacle of "deviant renunciation".[36] It may well be that Jamāl al-Dīn Sāwī immigrated to Damascus as a result of this cataclysm. Qutb al-Dīn Ḥaydar encouraged his disciples to flee; he himself is said to have disappeared at about this time.[37] These "wild" frontiers of Islamic civilisation were at the same time religious frontier regions which served as a refuge for individuals characterised by diverse heritages of heterodox Islamic tendencies and deviant philosophies of Sufi mysticism.

Among them were dervish preachers, who were instrumental in the process of spreading the *qalandarī* way.[38] One of them was Baraq, who is said to have been a disciple of Ṣarī Ṣaltūq Dede, the seventh/thirteenth-century semi-legendary Turkish warrior saint.[39] From him Baraq is said to have received both supernatural powers and his name (Baraq: Qıpchaq Turkish "hairy dog").[40] The appellation "dog" should be placed in the context of the dervishes' overall tendency to be closely related to animals. Of particular importance was their penchant to cohabit with animals that are often despised and deemed "unclean" in Islam, especially wild dogs, thereby making a mockery of Islamic conventions.[41] At the same time, it is worth remembering Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī's (d. 672/1273) description of the dog who is as well "a seeker after God" awaiting illumination in the mundane "cave" of the physical world:

> Into the dog of the Companions (of the Cave) there passed from those Sleepers a (moral) disposition, so that he had become a seeker of God.[42]

tenth/sixteenth century, see Karamustafa [1994] 2006, and from the eighth/fourteenth to the eleventh/seventeenth century, see Ocak 1992.

35 The groups in which the Turkish ethnic element predominated also served as a source for mercenary recruits. Maḥmūd of Ghazna (r. 389/999–421/1030), for instance, is known to have drawn heavily upon this human resource for his Indian campaigns. Bosworth [1963], 1992, pp. 98–105, 109 f.; Mélikoff, "Ghāzī," *EI²*. Consulted online on 26 September 2016.

36 Köprülü 2006, pp. 37, 158, 178, 184, esp. 196–198.

37 See Boivin 2012, p. 31.

38 Cf. *Dānishmend-nāme*, French trans. Mélikoff, vol. 1, p. 51.

39 *Eadem*, p. 43 and n. 1.

40 Dankoff 1971, pp. 102–117.

41 Ocak 1989, p. 30. Cf. Watenpaugh 2005, pp. 535–565, p. 546 and n. 75.

42 Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, *Mathnawī*, ed. and English trans. Nicholson, II, 1425, see also V, 2009–10.

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The affinity of the *qalandar*s to the Qur'ānic version of the story of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus is also reflected by the fact that a Buddhist cave-temple in Eastern Turkestan was transformed by the *qalandar* tradition into a Ṣūfī shrine, popularly known as the "Seven Qalandars" (*yiti qalandar*s).[43]

Qalandarī-inspired social anarchism emerged as a distinctive literary form in Persian poetry, the so-called *qalandariyyāt*, that revolves around provocative themes which are reflected in *kharābāt* (literally "ruins" but alluding to "taverns" and "brothels").[44] A couplet of the sixth/twelfth-century Iranian poet Khāqānī (d. 595/1198–99) from Shirwān, in which he assumes the guise of the wine drinker, allegorically uses the forbidden act of wine drinking. This act is transposed from the realm of profane poetry to the mystical level, symbolising radical detachment from the world:

What are we called in this city after the first name "dog"?
Wine sediment slurper *malāmatī*, money burner *qalandarī*.[45]

Such display led to derision and denigration, with critics accusing these antinomian dervishes of subverting natural social order by engaging in deviant sexual practices such as zoophilia and sodomy. A source on this matter is the Genoese Giovanantonio Menavino, who was captured at the age of twelve by an Ottoman fleet and subsequently lived at the court of Sultan Bayezid II (r. 886/1481–918/1512). Rather scathingly he relates that

dressed in sheepskins, the *ṭorlaq*s [that is, the *qalandar*s] are otherwise naked with no headgear. … they live like beasts, surviving on alms only. … chew hashish and sleep on the ground; they openly practice sodomy like savage beasts.[46]

It has to be born in mind though that throughout the ages and in different cultural contexts, religious splinter groups and sects have been vulnerable to such representations. Societal discourse often linked what was considered as deviant behaviour in a socio-religious context with sexual deviancy and forms of sex that were regarded as reprehensible, irrespective of whether they were actually practiced. However, as Ahmet Karamustafa has shown, these allegations

cannot be discarded altogether. Rejection of marriage, or even the female sex, does not entail complete abstinence from sexual activity. Celibacy, in this context, meant primarily the refusal to participate in the sexual reproduction of society and did not exclude unproductive forms of sexual activity. It is likely, therefore, that antisocial ways of sexual

43 Zarcone 2000, 103.
44 Cf. Pratt-Ewing 1997, 230–252; de Bruijn 1992, pp. 75–86.
45 *Dīwān*, ed. Sajjādī, Tehran, 1338, p. 421, 3, cited after Meier 1976, p. 500, n. 180.
46 Menavino, *Trattato*, pp. 79–83; German trans. Müller, 36 *b*–37 *b* (n. 7), cited after Karamustafa [1994] 2006, pp. 6 f.

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gratification came to be included in the deliberately rejectionist repertoire of some dervishes. The existence of a distinct group of youths known as *kōçek*s (from Persian *kūchak*, "youngster") among the Abdāls is certainly suggestive in this regard.[47]

In spite of the obligation attendant on an itinerant life, antinomian dervishes also appeared occasionally in settled regions. The third Ottoman Sultan Murād I (761/1360–791/1389) constructed a *zāwiya* ("lodge") for a dervish called Pūstin-Pūsh (literally "the one bearing an animal's skin") in Yenishehir, where his tomb is to be found, and offered feasts and gifts to *qalandar*s on the occasion of the circumcision of his son. Following a dream, his successor Bāyazīd I (755/1354–805/1403) had built a magnificent dervish *tekke* ("dervish gathering place") and *türbe* ("tomb") for the shepherd Qoyun Bābā (literally "father of sheep") at ʿOthmānjiq near Amasya in Anatolia, one of the finest and richest in the Ottoman Empire. Qoyun did not speak and is said to have received his name because he only bleated like a sheep at prayer time.[48] Mehmet Fātiḥ (835/1432–886/1481) likewise recompensed those *qalandar*s who supported him during the siege of Constantinople by giving them a Byzantine church dedicated to Theotokos *ta Kyrou* which they renamed Qalandar-khāna.[49] In Mamluk Egypt the name of a royal patron, Barqūq, appears on the inscription of a *zawiyā* which he built in 781/1379 for the Shaykh Ḥājjī Rajab al-Shīrāzī al-Ḥaydarī.[50]

Notwithstanding this interaction with the "civilised" world, the deviant dervish occupied a distinct marginal position by remaining totally outside the normal social world. However, to quote Karamustafa, he "did not withdraw into the wild nature to lead a life of seclusion but created for himself a 'social wilderness' at the heart of society where his fiercely antisocial activity functioned as a sobering critique of society's failure to reach God".[51] Bābā Ṭāhir ʿUryān ("the Naked") Hamadhānī (d. first half of the fifth/eleventh century), who proclaims himself as "the white falcon of Hamadhān", is reported to have written the following quatrain:

I am that wanderer whose name is Qalandar; /
I have neither home nor goods nor monastery. /

47 Karamustafa [1994] 2006, 20–21. In the early modern era this is compounded by examples of dervishes who openly professed transgressive sexual behaviour, in some cases even indicating an inversion of prevailing gender roles; see *idem* 2015, p. 121 f.

48 von Hammer-Purgstall 1827–1835, vol. 1, p. 192; Babinger, *"Ḳoyun* Baba", *EI*^{2}. Consulted online on 26 September 2016.

49 Striker and Kuban, eds, 1997, p. 18. For examples of further Qalandar-khānas, see Wāḥidī, ed. Karamustafa, p. 111.

50 Kalus 1982, vol. 17, p. 303. For further examples, see Trimingham 1998, pp. 268 f.

51 Karamustafa [1994] 2006, pp. 13–14.

When day comes I wander around the world; /
when night falls I lay my head on a brick.[52]

The peripatetic lifestyle and voluntary acts of material divestment, such as living on the streets and sleeping on the ground, or sheltering in graveyards and eating gathered, uncultivated food were suggestive of a descent to animal levels of poverty and the conditions and ways of life of animals. The display of animal attributes served as a reflection of the dervish's own animal-like, uncontrollable force as a means of liberation and critique of social controls. This served not only as an assertion of mastery over the animal specimens from which they were stripped but they also demonstrated that the dervishes shared their habitat with these animals thereby reflecting their own dangerous, disruptive force vis-à-vis social norms. This marginal space also served as an experimental theatre for testing the blurred boundaries between humans and other forms of being.

Some of the *qalandar*s allegedly believed in metempsychosis (*tanāsukh*) and denied the existence of the next world. Baraq himself reportedly believed that the first Shīʿite *imām*, ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, was a divine incarnation.[53] For all these reasons, Baraq and his disciples were generally perceived to be *ibāḥī*s (literally "permission"), a term generally applied to antinomian teachings.[54]

A group of *qalandar*s, the Abdāls of Rūm, who openly professed *ithnā ʿasharī* ("Twelver") Shīʿa beliefs, performed special ascetic practices. These included ritual self-laceration and blood-shedding by piercing their own bodies with swords or iron (Fig. 1). According to a description given by Wāḥidī in his work on mysticism, *Menāqib* ("Exploits", completed in 929/1522), some of the inflicted wounds included cuts that spelled the name of ʿAlī. They emblazoned their chests with images of the crescent, the Dhu 'l-Faqār (the famous double-bladed sword which the Prophet Muḥammad obtained as booty in the battle of Badr and passed on to his cousin and son-in-law), or the name of Ḥaydar (or Ḥaydara, lion, the first proper name of ʿAlī). On their upper arms the Abdāls of Rūm incised the form of serpents.[55] Such self-mortification left marks on the body that stood as visual reminders of the dervishes' exertions and communicated their spectacular and theatrical actions to wider audiences. The Abdāls are also reported to have gone about "naked and barefoot, … wear[ing] only deerskins, or the skins of some other beasts".[56]

52 *Dīwān-i Bābā Ṭāhir ʿUryān Hamadhānī*, ed. Manūchihr Ādamīyat, p. 8; cited after Karamustafa [1994] 2006, p. 114, n. 28.

53 Ocak 1989, p. 110; Karamustafa [1994] 2006, p. 2; Algar, "Barāq Bābā", *EIr.*

54 Ocak 1989, p. 30.

55 Imber 1980, p. 38; *idem* 1996, p. 132.

56 As recorded in the memoirs of the Serbian soldier Konstantin Mihailović (2011, p. 69) who served as a Janissary in the army of the Ottoman Empire from 1455 to 1463.

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Fig. 1 Abdāl-i Rūm. After Nicolas de Nicolay, *Les navigations, pérégrinations et voyages faits en la Turquie par Nicolas de Nicolay*, Anvers: n.p., 1626, fol. 188. © Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Another group of dervishes that rejected "normative piety" were the Rifāʿīs. The eighth/fourteenth-century traveller Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (703/1304–770 or 779/1368 or 1377) who often used to stay in their lodges called them Aḥmadī after the fraternity's eponym Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Rifāʿī (d. 578/1182–3). He knew their rituals well, writing about Rifāʿī dervishes in Wāsiṭ that after praying the first night prayer, they began to recite their collective vocal *dhikr* (literally "remembering God")[57] which was followed by a musical recital:

> They had prepared loads of fire-wood which they kindled into a flame and went into the midst of it dancing; some of them rolled in the fire, and others ate it in their mouths, until

57 For a discussion on this Sufi devotional practice, see Gardet, "Dhikr," *EI*^{2}. Consulted online on 26 September 2016.

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finally they extinguished it entirely. This is their regular custom and it is a peculiar characteristic of their corporation of Aḥmadī brethren. Some of them will take a large snake and bite its head with their teeth until they bite it clean through.[58]

He came across Ḥaydarīs in India on two occasions; the first was in the vicinity of Amroha in northern India and the second, at Ghogah in Malabar.[59]

One of the deviant dervish groups that crystallised in India were the Jalālīs, who professed allegiance to the celebrated saint of Uch in Sind, Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn al-Bukhārī, better known as Makhdūm-i Jahāniyān Jahāngasht (d. 785/1384). The Jalālīs also distinguished themselves by practising the *chāhar ḍarb* and by professing a fervent Shīʿīsm which expressed itself in comparable ritualistic practices, such as handling and devouring live snakes and scorpions without any pain or wound.[60] The dervishes were said to become so transported in their prayers that they were oblivious to the bites of the venomous reptiles.

Such practices are allegorically alluded to in a poem recorded by the famous Amīr Ḥasan Sijzī of Delhi (d. 737/1336) which was recited before his Shaykh Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyāʾ (d. 726/1325) and which had already been performed in the presence of the great Shaykh Bahāʾ al-Dīn Zakariyyā (d. 666/1267–68):

At dawn, again and again, each evening,
My eyes, due to love of you, keep weeping.
My liver, bitten by the snake of desire,
No doctor nor charmer has the means of curing.
For none but he who inflames me with desire
Can, if he chooses, quench that raging fire.[61]

The practice of taming and consorting with snakes seems to have been a prerogative of the "fools for God" (*muwallah*) who are characteristic of the mystical type of madness. In his *risāla* ("epistle") on Muslim spiritual life in seventh/

58 *The Travels*, English trans. Gibb, vol. 2, pp. 273 f. In Anatolia Ibn Baṭṭūṭa visited Rifāʿī *zāwiya*s in Amasya, Izmir and Betgama. This report is corroborated by a contemporary anecdote told by the eighth/fourteenth-century hagiographer Aḥmad Aflākī (d. 761/1360) whose work was compiled between 718/1318–9 and 754/1353–4. He relates that when the Rifāʿī Shaykh Sayyidī Tāj al-Dīn ibn Sayyidī Aḥmad arrived together with a group of dervishes of his order in the city of Konya, they elicited awe and horror from the spectators with their performance of similar charismatic exploits and miraculous deeds such as fire-walking, snake-eating, etc.; Aflākī, *Manāqib al-ʿārifin*, French trans. Huart, vol. 2, pp. 202 f.; English trans. O'Kane, p. 498.

59 Cf. Karamustafa [1994] 2006, p. 60.

60 Rizvi 1978, pp. 8, 277–282; Ahmad 1968, p. 44; Gramlich 1981, vol. 1, pp. 71–73; Karamustafa [1994] 2006, p. 61. See also Bosworth 1976, pp. 204, 92, 260 f., V.92–3.

61 *Fawāʾid al-fuʾād* (compiled between 707/1307 and 721/1321), ed. and English trans. Lawrence 1992, pp. 66 f.

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thirteenth-century Egypt, Ṣafī al-Dīn (d. 682/1283) records the example of a woman in Giza who was considered a holy fool and who "stood for three years in a field of grass without ever sitting and without any protection; the serpents are said to have taken refuge around her, and she was fed by whatever was given to her".[62]

It has to be kept in mind that from the fifth/eleventh century onwards – thus predating the spread of the *qalandarī* movement – derangement in a holy man appeared as a recognised form of Muslim spirituality. This extension of mysticism seems to have made divine madness, both transitory and continuous, almost commonplace. As a result it widened the bounds of social tolerance for unusual behaviour and "altered states" of consciousness. An example is given by the celebrated Sufi poet Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār (d. 618/1221), who describes the intoxicated mystic al-Shiblī (d. 334/946), in the manner of the *majdhūb*, or holy fool, enrapt in mystical experience:

> Peace and composure altogether deserted him. So powerful was the love possessing him, so completely was he overwhelmed by mystical tumult, that he went and flung himself into the Tigris. The river surged and cast him up on the bank. Then he hurled himself into the fire, but the flames affected him not. He sought a place where hungry lions were gathered and cast himself before them; the lions all fled away from him.[63]

Rūmī's enigmatic *murshīd* (spiritual guide) and friend, the dervish Shams-i Tabrīzī (d. probably 645/1247), was sometimes called Shams-i Paranda, "Shams the Flying", presumably because of his restless itinerant life.[64] The power to turn into a bird and to fly is a feat that is also known to have been performed by the great Central Asian Shaykh Aḥmed Yasawī (d. 562/1166–7) who, according to the *Wilāyat-nāma* of Ḥājjī Bektāsh ("Book of Sanctity of Ḥājjī Bektāsh"), could become a crane (*turna*). This hagiography also records that like his spiritual ancestor, Aḥmed Yasawī, Ḥājjī Bektāsh could transform in a bird and that he performed the well-known miracle of flying from Khurasan to Anatolia in the shape of a dove (*güvercin*).[65]

According to an account of Shams-i Tabrīzī:

> … two mystics were having a boasting contest (*mufākhara*) and a debate with each other, about secrets of mystical knowledge and the stations of the mystics. One said, 'A person

62 Ṣafī al-Dīn, *Risāla*, ed. and French trans. Gril, fol. 120b. See Dols 1992, p. 405.

63 *Idem*, pp. 385 f.

64 Aflāki, *Manāqib al-ʿārifin*, ed. Yazıcı, vol. 1, p. 85, lines 6–8; French trans. Huart, p. 69. The same epithet is used, for instance, for Luqmān-i Paranda, one of the successors of Aḥmad Yasawī, the "founder" of the eponymous Yasawiyya.

65 According to the *Wilāyet-nāme-i Ḥājim Sulṭān* Hājjī Togrul, the son of Qaraja Aḥmad, transformed into a falcon and flew into the sky whence he saw that a double-headed dove sat at Suluja Kara Ōjük (present-day Hadži Bektaš); *Wilāyet-nāme-i Ḥājim Sulṭān*, German trans. Tschudi, 23.

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who comes along sitting on a donkey, to me that one is God'. The other one said, 'To me, the donkey is God'. In short, they tried to outdo each other by force. With Bayazid [Bīṣṭāmī] and others, in their words it is clear that it is not like this. But to spend time on their sayings is a veil, for this reason, that it is something else. Someone said, 'What is that something else?' I said, 'For example, you heard these words of mine, they become cold in your heart. That veil became something like this. They are near to incarnationism; the words of the spirituals are, we dwelled in a single body,' and he goes on to ask, 'How will you comprehend that you are full of desire?'[66]

Even though this discussion may have been intended to be multi-layered, and perhaps somewhat derisive, it nonetheless is an indication that in spiritual circles there were discussions about incarnation and, by association, incarnation into an animal form.

In 897/1491–2 Ḥāmid Jamālī Kanbōh (d. 941/1535), Iskandar Lodī's court poet, visited the great poet 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (817/1414–898/1492) in Herat. According to the later *tadhkira* ("Memoirs"), *Afsāna-i Shāhān* ("Stories of Shahs") by Muḥammad Kabīr ibn Shāh Ismāʿīl, Jamālī was dressed as a wandering *qalandar* with shaved head, clad in a donkey's hide around the waist, and his body was smeared with ashes, symbolising the renunciation of worldly matters. Jāmī mistook him at first for an ordinary *qalandar* and mocked his appearance, quite rudely asking what the difference was between Jamālī and a donkey. Jamālī responded with a jest, saying that the difference was "in the skin, because the donkey wore it all its life and the *qalandar* in order to sit on it".[67]

2. Animal hides, *qalandarī* symbolism and formalised brotherhoods

The dressed skins of animals, such as (wild) sheep, goats, bears, stags, gazelles, panthers, leopards or donkeys were not only worn as clothing but were also used as ceremonial seats (Persian *pūst*, or Turkish *post*, literally "pellis, skin"), which assumed a special significance in a number of Ṣūfī fraternities. Great respect was accorded to the seat because it represented the spiritual master's controlled animals self. A *Faqr-nāma* ("Book of Poverty") attributed to Jaʿfar Ṣādiq ("the trustworthy"), the last *imām* recognized by the Twelver Shīʿīs, enumerates the four different skins used by the *qalandar*s: the skin of the mufflon with spiralling horns (*mārkhwār*),[68] the skin of the lion, the skin of the black gazelle with white

66 Ernst 2010, p. 292.

67 Muḥammad Kabīr ibn Shaykh Ismāʿīl Hazyiā, *Afsāna-i Shāhān*, ms. British Museum, Rieu, add. 24.409, fol. 36a–36b, in the chapter titled, "How Jamālī left Sikandar [Iskandar Lodī (r. 1489–1517)] for Mecca". Cf. Suvorova 2004, 193.

68 The makhor (*Capra Falconeri*) with its large coiled horns is considered to be a "solar animal", since like the soul it climbs up towards the peaks. Caprids were greatly appre-

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legs (*nīlgaw*) and the skin of the deer (*āhū*). It also specifies the verses that the Prophet Muḥammad said when he sat on the mufflon skin, that ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib said when he sat on the lion skin, that the famous Umayyad preacher Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (21/642–110/728) said when he sat on the gazelle skin and that the *qalandar* said when he threw the animal skin on his shoulders.[69]

The title *pūst-nishīn* (literally "the one sitting on the [animal's] skin") is given to the head of a dervish order.[70] Amongst the Bektāshīyya which during the tenth/sixteenth century emerged as a major new brotherhood carrying the legacy of the earlier *qalandar*s, especially in Turkey and Eastern Europe,[71] sections of the fur hide are accorded a specific symbolism.[72] Its head, feet, right and left side, has its condition, middle, soul, law, truth, etc. The head signifies submissiveness. The feet service. The right the right hand of fellowship, at initiations. The left, honour. The east, secrecy. The west, religion. The condition (obligatory) to bow the head before the *arans* [noble fellows]. The middle is love", and so forth.[73] In Bektāshī *tekke*s the hides, which can be twelve in number but are usually four,[74] symbolise the perpetual presence of the *imām*s and the saints who are particularly revered by the Bektāshīyya; among them are the *pūst*s that personify ʿAlī, Sayyid ʿAlī Sulṭān, Hājjī Bektāsh, Qayghusuz Abdāl, Bālım Sulṭān and al-Khaḍir. In the course of the initiatory ceremony, both the head of the *tekke*, or *bābā* ("father"), and the novice, or *ṭālib*, prostrate themselves before these animal skins to show reverence to their invisible owners.[75] The first four of the *pūst*s, however, are reserved as the seats of God and his angels.[76]

ciated by the dervishes; their horns served as ex-votos at dervish tombs and pilgrimage sites; see Castagné 1951, p. 77. Nicolas de Nicolay also states that, together with other trophies, they decorated the heads or the shoulders of some *qalandars* in Constantinople; De Nicolay 1989, p. 197. According to the travelogue of an anonymous sixteenth-century Italian merchant, Marand, the native city of the famous Lāl Shahbāz Qalandar was widely known for its gigantic gates made of Makhor horns; Barbaro and Contarini 1873, p. 165.

69 *Risāla fī maʿrifat al-faqr*, pp. 79 f., Islamabad, Ganjbakhsh Library; see Tortel 2009, p. 259. John Porter Brown (1814–1872), the secretary of the American legation to the Ottoman empire, reports that the dervishes in Constantinople and throughout the Near East, often belonging to the Chishtī and Suhrawardī, Naqshbandī or Qādirī orders, generally wore a hide, either a tiger or leopard's skin, over their shoulders. Brown 1868, p. 94.

70 Birge 1937, p. 57 n. 2, p. 269. Comparable titles were also applied to spiritual leaders who fell heir to the spiritual authority and blessing of a revered saintly founder, see Meier 1976, pp. 438–467, esp. p. 458.

71 Birge 1937, p. 49; Meier 1976, p. 510; Knysh, "Sadjdjāda," *EI*^{2}. Consulted online on 26 September 2016.

72 The colour of the fur hides of different orders are discussed by İnançer 2005, p. 127.

73 Brown 1868, pp. 248 f.

74 Birge 1937, pp. 178–180; cf. Brown 1868, pp. 186–190.

75 Birge 1937, pp. 181 f.

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Dervishes also used the *takht-i pūst* as a rug on which the *ṣalāt*, the ritual prayer, was performed.[77] The prophet Adam is said to be have received his *sajjāda* from the angel Jībrīl who had made it from the skins of the sheep of Paradise.[78] Such hides and fleeces of animals – which had been ritually slaughtered, skinned and consumed[79] – served as sacred spaces of mystical meditation *par excellence.*[80] Since the shaykh "is the spiritual heir of the founder, whose qualities and powers become inherent in him upon his succession, … he is called *shaikh al-sajjāda* (master of the prayer-mat, or skin) … since he inherits that of the founder as symbol of his authority", writes John Spencer Trimingham adding that, "… [moreover] succession to the *sajjāda* is spiritual".[81] As a result dervishes ascribe to these skins miraculous powers that were imparted through the blessing and the beneficial grace of the spiritual masters who employed them.[82] Some types of *sajjāda* even depict the reproduction of animal skins, perhaps mirroring the transitional stage between the use of an actual animal skin and that of a prayer rug with ornamental figures of a secular character.[83] The influential seventh/thirteenth-century Shāfiʿite jurist al-Nawawī (d. 676/1277) referred to the traditionists Abū Dā'ūd al-Sijistānī (d. 275/889) and al-Tirmidhī (d. 279/892) in expounding the Prophet Muḥammad's ban on the use of the skins of wild animals, specifically citing the use of leopard skins elsewhere in the same section. It is tempting to consider these explicit exhortations as evidence that such practices were in fact ongoing at the time al-Nawawī was writing.[84]

76 On the other hand, some Bektāshī theories interpreted these hides as symbols of the four major stages of the mystical path: *sharīʿa*, *ṭarīqa*, *ḥaqīqa*, *maʿrifa*; Brown 1868, 201 f., 249; cf. Gramlich 1981, pp. 83 f. Brown (1868, p. 195) also records that one of the various Bektāshī prayers is called *takbīr-i khirqa wa pūst*, or ['magnification'] for the mantle and seat.

77 According to a canonical *ḥadīth* the Prophet Muḥammad performed *ṣalāt* (mandatory prayer) on his own cloak and his bedding (*firāsh*) (al-Bukhārī, "Ṣālāt," *bāb* 348; Muslim, "Ṣālāt," *bāb* 239; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, I.320) as well as on a tanned skin or fur (Abū Dā'ūd al-Sijistānī, "Ṣālāt," *bāb* 91, 92; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, IV.254).

78 Tschudi, "Bektāshiyya," *EI*^{2}. Consulted online on 26 September 2016. It is to be remembered that the Abdāls of Rūm professed to be following in the footsteps of Adam, who was almost completely naked and free of possessions when he was expelled from Paradise.

79 Gramlich (1981, p. 49) cites the example of the itinerant dervishes of the Shīʿī Khāksār order who use the skin of a ram.

80 Landolt 1965, p. 247; cf. Ferrier 1959, pp. 58, 61.

81 Trimingham 1998, p. 173.

82 Landolt 1965, pp. 244, 247.

83 Durul 1957, pp. 65 f., pls. XL and XLI; Ereshefsky 1978, pp. 47–52, esp. pp. 49 f.

84 al-Nawawī, *Riyāḍ as-Saliḥīn*, English trans. Khan, *bāb* 123.

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3. *Qalandarī* animal-like paraphernalia, animal-style sustenance and supremacy over untamed forces

The symbolic appropriation of, and control over, animals figures among the paraphernalia of dervishes as well as on objects of personal adornment. The *qalandar*s usually subsisted on charity and the food received as alms was stored in the *kashkūl*, or portable begging bowl, an oval bowl of metal, wood or coconut. These offerings, the *Risāla-i Faqr-nāma-i Abu'l Ḥasān-i Kharaqānī* stipulates, must be shared with cats and dogs.[85] According to another *Faqr-nāma* (Book of Spiritual Poverty) attributed to Ja'far Ṣādiq, the food is to be partaken of with other poor people and *has to be eaten like a dog, or cat or other animal.*[86]

One method of collecting *nadhr* (alms, often vowed offerings), which involved "setting foot in the houses of worldly people", is explained in a revelatory vision of the Transoxianian Bābā Sa'īd Palangpōsh (1020/1611–1111/1699; literally "Leopard Skin Bābā") in an anecdote from the *Malfūẓāt-i Naqshbandiyya* (Oral Discourses of the Naqshbandiyya) compiled by Shāh Maḥmūd Aurangābād in the late eleventh/seventeenth century:

> … for three days and nights Bābā Palangpōsh sat there and did not rise. On the fourth day he went to the washing-place to renew his *wuḍū*' [ablution], and when he came out he said [to his *murīd* or disciple]: "Go and see what the state is!" [The latter] went in there and looked, and he saw that a lot of blood had flowed, as if seven or eight sheep had had their throats cut. Then Shah Palangpōsh spoke again: "I have been licensed and appointed by God – may He be exalted and glorified! – to take money from the wealthy for my visiting [them] and bestow it upon the indigent. Truly the lion goes out in search of food after three days, when his hunger has grown. He does not set up his authority over lesser animals until he has brought a massive prey into his claws. After eating something, he leaves what remains for those beneath him, like jackals and foxes and so on, and in his accustomed manner turns back to his rest!"[87]

As shown in the example of Bābā Palangpōsh[88] not only the devouring but also the collecting of *nadhr* must be animal-like. The boat-shaped *kashkūl*s – identical in

85 Ivanow 1926, no. 1338, p. 639, *Risāla-i Faqr-nāma-i Abu'l Ḥasān-i Kharaqānī*, I.A.1. pp. 25–45, section 8, and I. A.2. p. 157; see Tortel 2009, p. 255.

86 *Risāla fī ma'rifat al-faqr*, pp. 52–89, Islamabad, Ganjbakhsh Library; see Tortel 2009, p. 258.

87 Anecdote II. 13, pp. 17 f. The imagery of the vision derives from the fable of the first part of the *Pañcatantra*, of the lion as king of the beasts and the jackals at his court. Naqshbandī circles would have been familiar with the fable in the retelling of Kāshifī's *Anwār-i Suhaylī.* Cited after Dingby 1998, pp. 156 f., 164.

88 Born in Ghijuwān, north of Bukhara, Bābā Palangpōsh had joined a band of *qalandar*s as a young boy taking the road down the Khyber Pass from the Northwestern frontier region to the Deccan in India. During his a cycle of wanderings, he met, according

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form to standard wine-boats (*kashtī*) – are often depicted with tips curving upwards into dragon-shaped heads.[89] As Assadullah Souren Melikian-Chirvani has shown, the *kashkūl*s of the wandering dervishes were used to hold intoxicating beverages and could also be utilised to receive alms in any form, including food or monetary offerings.[90]

In addition to such accoutrements as the *pūst* or the *kashkūl* the dervish had also a gnarled staff (*manteshā* or *ʿaṣā*), which, according to the *Faqr-nāma* attributed to Jaʿfar Ṣādiq, alludes to the rod of Moses[91] that was transformed into a snake at the burning bush (Qurʾān 28:76–82) and was made of myrtlewood (*mūrd*).[92] It further explains that when Adam left Paradise, he took three things with him: the staff as well as a ring and four tree leaves.[93]

The famous Iranian poet and mystic Fakhr al-Dīn ʿIrāqī (d. 688/1289),[94] who began his career as teacher of a *madrasa* ("college") in Hamadān in western Iran, was, at some point in his life, attracted to the Qalandariyya and embraced their antinomian attitudes. When he fell in love with a young *qalandar* of extraordinary beauty who was part of a band of itinerants, he abandoned everything to travel with them. A mid-tenth/sixteenth-century Shīrāzī miniature re-

to the *Malfūẓāt*, the immortal prophet-saint Khʷāja Khiḍr, who bestowed on him a bow and two arrows with which Bābā Palangpōsh slew the beast that gave him his sobriquet, variously referred to as "lion" (*shīr*) or "leopard" (*palang*). These feats provided Bābā Palangpōsh with a special insignia, the potent cloak of authority and source of charisma. Digby 1998, pp. 143 f.

89 A dervish holding a *kashkūl* with dragon head terminals is shown on a miniature from Iran, Isfahan, signed by Riza-i ʿAbbāsī (ca. 972/1565–1044/1635), see Sotheby's *Arts of the Islamic World*, London, 24 April 2013, L13220, lot 61. For examples of such *kashkūl*s, see Melikian-Chirvani 1990–91, pp. 21–42, figs. 36, 37, 41–43, 51, 56, 60, 64, 69, 73 and pl. I.3.

90 Melikian-Chirvani 1990–91, pp. 21–42. For a discussion of the drug use of saintly itinerants in a post-colonial South Asia, see Green 2014, pp. 226–245.

91 In the surviving folios of the *Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh* ("Compendium of Chronicles") of Rashīd al-Dīn, Mūsā (Moses) is twice depicted supporting himself on an elongated staff that ends in a dragon head. See Rice and Gray 1976, pp. 60–63, pls. 11, 12. For further references to the dragon staff, see Kuehn 2011, pp. 232 f. ns. 230, 233.

92 For an Akbari miniature depicting wandering mystics with long dragon-headed staffs, see Brand and Lowry 1985, pp. 78, 146, fig. 40; and, Seyller and Thackston 2002, pp. 74 f., fig. 16. Such staffs have traditionally been used in comparable contexts; a portrait of a pilgrim monk discovered in the cave-temples of Dunhuang, dated to the late ninth century, depicts him accompanied by his tiger wandering with such a staff along with other paraphernalia; now in Paris, Musée Guimet, published in Bianchini and Guichard 2002, fig. 122.

93 *Risāla fī maʿrifat al-faqr*, pp. 52–89, Islamabad, Ganjbakhsh Library, see Tortel 2009, p. 258.

94 Chittick, "ʿErāqī, Faḵr al-Dīn Ebrāhīm." *EIr.*

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cords this event, showing him travelling with a group of *qalandar*s to India where the movement was firmly established as early as the reign of Iltutmush (607/1210–633/1236).[95] They were on their way to Multān in present-day Pakistan where he met his mystical master Bahā' al-Dīn Zakariyyā (d. 666/1267–68), the foremost Suhrawardī saint of the Panjāb.[96] The painting portrays one of the *qalandar*s carrying a tall dragon-headed mace.[97] These devices formed part of the stock symbolism of the antinomian milieu. Orkhān Ghāzī, son of the founder of the Ottoman dynasty, for instance, is known to have fashioned two maces in the likeness of dragons, to thank Abdāl Murād, an Abdāl of Rūm, for his feats as a dragon fighter – he is said to have saved the villages in the Yalova region from two dragons that came from the sea. One of the dragon maces he presented to the Abdāl, the other he kept in his treasury.[98]

In the *Meshā'ir al-Shu'arā* ("Senses of Poets") the tenth/sixteenth-century author 'Āshık Çelebi (926/1520–979/1572) from Prizren in Kosovo describes 'Alī Mest, a Ḥaydarī Bābā, as having worn earrings, a collar around his neck, chains on his body, as well as a "dragon-headed" hook under his belt and a sack.[99] Such belt hooks were commonly *S*-shaped with a central cuboctahedral or spherical knob, terminating at either end in a horned dragon head, with one of the ends bent to a closed position. Dragons or serpents as accoutrements in lieu of belts seems to have been a common part of *qalandarī* paraphernalia. A mid-eighteenth-century encyclopaedia entry on "Qalandars" in the *Encyclopédie de Diderot et d'Alembert* describes them as being covered by animal skins and girded, in place of a belt, with a bronze serpent given to them by their masters. This serpent, we are told, was considered to be a sign of their discipline.[100] We can assume that the iconography

95 Cf. Habib 1950, p. 3.

96 In an illustration to the *Majālis al-'ushshāq* (Shiraz, dated 959/1552, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ouseley Add. 24, fol. 79v), some of the *dervishes* are dressed in skins; a dark-skinned dervish is shown to raise a dragon-headed mace.

97 A miniature of the *Būstān* of Sa'dī, from Mandu, Sultanate period, c. 905–7/1500–2, signed by Haji Mahmud, shows *qalandarī* type dervishes at a place which is marked by a pole or *ṭūj* with a pennant of horse-hair or yak-tail tied to the top, an apotropaic symbol commonly demarcating a sacred place; in this illustration the pole is shown to end in a dragon head; New Delhi, National Museum, see Doshi 1983, fig. 14. It is not without interest to note that according to Menavino dervishes wore "felt hats … around which they hung strings of horse-hair about one hand in length". *Trattato*, pp. 75 f.; German trans. Müller, 35 *a*, cited after Karamustafa 1993a, p. 68.

98 İsmail Beliğ, who wrote in the twelfth/eighteenth century, records that one of the dragon maces was preserved in Abdāl Murād's *türbe. Güldeste-i rıyaz-ı ırfan*, Bursa: Hudavendigār Vilāyeti Matbaası, 1302/1884, p. 213, cited after Ocak 1989, p. 127.

99 'Āshık Çelebi, *Meşā'ir üş-şu'arā or Tezkere*, ed. Meredith-Owens, fol. 270b.

100 Ed. Paris, 1751; see Tortel 2009, p. 223. It is of note that among the relics preserved at the tomb at Lalish in Iraq of the Arab ascetic Shaykh 'Adī b. Musāfir al-Hakkārī (d. c. 557/

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was implicitly imbued with favourable properties, possibly of an empowering quality, which would in turn be passed on to the owner of the buckle. At the same time it served as a sign of supremacy and of victory over untamed forces.

4. Metamorphoses into animals, the subduing of animal traits in the soul and the reconciling of opposing forces

Close associations with this serpent type imagery also feature in a late nineteenth-century description of an English traveller who records that

> in olden times the Kalandeeres [*qalandar*s, whom he considers to be Bektāshīs] used to go about half-naked [in the streets of Constantinople and throughout the entire East] and often with a large snake twined about their bodies. Women who desired to bear children would rush forth from their houses to greet these uncanny creatures, and even kiss them, in spite of their loathsome appearance.[101]

His account tallies with the fact that deviant dervishes and holy fools often lived with wild and venomous creatures without fear, defeating or taming them, and establishing mutually non-predatory relations with both domestic and wild animals.[102] The *Asrār al-tawḥid*, a collection of biographical anecdotes of the great Khurasanī mystic Abū Saʿīd ibn Abū al-Khayr (357/967–440/1049), for instance, records that a large snake nestled at the feet of the shaykh, making *taqarrub*, that is, drawing near to him in grovelling deference.[103]

Examples of such devotion on the part of animals are preserved in numerous accounts. In a story about the eminent eighth/fourteenth-century Kubrawī Shaykh Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī (d. 786/1385), who is known to have led the life of a wandering dervish,[104] the Prophet instructs him in a dream to designate the place

1162), who became the central figure of the Kurdish Yazīdiyya, was a bronze serpent and the belt of Aḥmad Rifāʿī. See Menzel 1911, vol. 1, p. 186.

101 Davey 1897, p. 71. Cf. Tortel 2009, p. 223.

102 This paradigmatic relationship is mirrored in the tenth/sixteenth-century Mughal miniature, attributed to Mukunda, dated ca. 1003/1595, featuring an itinerant dervish clad in a sheep skin with his pet sheep. Michell 1982, cat. 267, p. 171.

103 In a late tenth/sixteenth-century Ottoman miniature, preserved in Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, an ox prostrates itself before Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī as an act of devotion, *taqarrub*, to the mystic. Lewis 2002, fig. 132. The ox, due to its use in ploughing, acquired a special veneration, more particularly in the rural districts of the ʿAlawī-Bektāshīs. Several episodes of the legendary biography of Ḥājjī Bektāsh are stories inspired by this notion, see the *Wilāyat-nāma of Ḥājjī Bektāsh*, ed. Gölpınarlı, pp. 53–55, 83, German trans. Gross, 1927, pp. 90, 93; *Wilāyat-nāma of Ḥājim Sulṭān*, German trans. Tschudi, 1914, pp. 28, 32.

104 Bashir 2011, p. 93.

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of his future gravesite (*mazār*) in Kūlāb in present-day southwestern Tajikistan. When the shaykh led his dervishes to the site, the spot was "further sanctified by the miraculous gathering of the animals in the vicinity, which frightened Hamadānī's companions until every beast bowed before the Shaykh".[105] Another prominent example is found in a report of the life of Geyikli Bābā, also known as Āhūlu Bābā (literally "Bābā with a stag"), one of the most famous *bābā*s of the Abdāls of Rūm, who, according to the ninth/fifteenth-century Ottoman historian ʿĀshiq-Pasha-Zāde (d. after 889/1484, possibly after 896–7/1491), was known by this name because he lived peacefully among the deer whose antlers crowned his *taj* (headdress).[106] Like most other *bābā*s of the Abdāls of Rūm, Geyikli Bābā was an ecstatic *bābā* or *majdhūb* (literally "the attracted one") who had miraculous powers (*karāma*).[107] According to Ewliyā Čelebī, he was a companion of Abdāl Mūsā and a disciple of the Aḥmad Yasawī, who "used to ride on wild roes [roe bucks] in the woods, and load gazelles with his baggage after he had harnessed them".[108] In spite of his many disciples, who possessed the same powers as their master and could likewise mount deer, Geyikli Bābā led the life of ascetic seclusion.[109]

The psychological perspective, according to which identification with an animal implies becoming one, provides grounds for taking the genre of transformation stories seriously. A further example is given by the semi-legendary saint and patron of the Anatolian tanners' guilds, Akhī Ewrān (Evran or Evren, "snake, dragon"),[110] who distinguished himself not only by freeing the inhabitants of

105 DeWeese 1999, p. 149. For legends describing saints metamorphosed into animals such as stags or lions, or riding upon them, as in the legend of Abdāl Mūsā, see Ergun 1944, vol. 1, pp. 166–169.

106 ʿĀshiq-Pasha-Zāde, p. 46, cited after Ocak 1989, p. 118.

107 Tashköprü-Zāde's (d. 968/1561) *Shaqāʾiq al-nuʿmānīya*, p. 32, cited after Ocak 1989, p. 120.

108 Geyikli Bābā was a disciple of the Shaykh Ilyās; see von Hammer-Purgstall 1827–1835, vol. 1, pp. 111–112. According to Ewliyā, he came from Khōy in Azerbaijan, and was buried at Bursa, in the *türbe*, next to a mosque and large *tekke* built by Orkhān Ghāzī in his memory (*Siyāḥat-nāme,* vol. 2, pp. 21 and 24). Cf. Ocak 1989, p. 119.

109 Cf. Ocak 1989, p. 119. This echoes the legendary accounts of the *Wilāyat-nāma* of Ḥājim Sulṭān in which a noble gazelle-like stag approached Hājjim Sultan when he was in the vicinity of Sayyid Ghāzī's *zāwiya* and spiritually shook his hand. German trans. Tschudi, p. 88. One of his wondrous deeds, recorded in Tashköprü-Zāde's *Al-Shaqāʾiq* (pp. 11–12, cited after Karamustafa [1994] 2006, p. 15; Ocak 1989, p. 122), reports a competition between Geyikli Bābā and another well-known dervish, Abdāl Mūsā. As a sign of his *karāma*, the latter sent a piece of burning coal wrapped in cotton to Geyikli Bābā; yet, he had to acknowledge the greatness of Geyikli Bābā when he received a bowl of deer's milk from him in return. Abdāl Mūsā explained that it was more difficult to enchant living beings (*ḥayawan*) than plants. For the motif of gazelle milk, see n. 24.

110 Cf. Mélikoff 1998, pp. 11, 78, 89, 136, 157, 199.

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Kırshehir in central Anatolia from a dragon but also by metamorphosing into a serpent and by appearing in the form of this animal in his tomb (*türbe*).[111] In the *Wilāyat-nāma* of Ḥājjī Bektāsh, the saint and his *abdāl*s are recorded as having the ability to mount lions and to take their form.[112] This was a natural consequence since the dervish who has mastered the animal traits in his/her soul (*nafs*) and has become fully submissive to the divine will realise that all beings become submissive to him/her.

The genre of transformation stories extends as far as dreams of eschatological peace that involve the idea of a universe of harmony, celebrated also in Isaiah 11.6–9, when "the lion will lie down with the lamb". Rūmī describes this as the place in which:

> …the lion lays his head (in submission) before the deer; … the falcon lays (droops) his wings before the partridge.[113]

Ḥājjī Bektāsh is well-known as the saint who could reconcile the opposing forces embodied in the fierce and the docile. Standard depictions show him as keeping both a lion and a gazelle in his lap.

* * * * *

This ability to metamorphose, to transcend the most challenging and dangerous situations and to respond to changing circumstances, was a quality commonly associated with dervishes. The metamorphosis of men into animals and *mutatis mutandis*, of animals into men, belongs to the wondrous powers of the saints. The *Manqabat al-jawāhir* (written before 872/1467–68), for instance, records the appearance of a large black snake before Shaykh Hamadānī's *khānaqāh* ("hospice"); it assumed human form and entered to receive the *bayʿat* ("initiation") from the shaykh to become his disciple.[114] As metaphors for change and trans-

111 Akhī Ewrān is moreover said to have been protected by a dragon, see Roux, "Drachen", *Wörterbuch der Mythologie* VII, 1, p. 314. His name has also given rise to the hypothesis of a survival of a snake cult. See Gordlevskiy, V., *Dervishi Akhi Evrana i tsekhi v Turtsii* ("The Dervishes of Akhi Ewran and the Craftsmen Guilds in Turkey"), Izvestiya Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1927, pp. 1171–94 (French résumé by Vajda 1934, pp. 79–88). Cf. Taeschner, "Akhī Ewrān", *EI*^{2} (consulted online on 26 September 2016); also Boratov 1957, pp. 382–385; Kuehn 2011, pp. 186–190.

112 For examples of saints mounting a lion and brandishing a serpent in the hand, see Kuehn 2011, p. 201.

113 Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, *Mathnawī*, ed. and English trans. Nicholson, VI, 1631.

114 Badakhshī, Ḥaydar (n.d.), *Manqabat al-jawāhir*, Ms. India Office 1850, British Library, no. 9, ff. 362a–362b, cited after DeWeese 1999, p. 154 n. 1. On the *Manqabat al-jawāhir*, see DeWeese 1999, pp. 127–158.

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formation on the mystic path, animals, in particular the serpent or the dragon, often function as hermeneutic tools of particular significance for these mystics.

The Ṣūfī denunciation of the *anima bruta* or "commanding soul" (*nafs ammara*; Qur'ān 12:53) as a dragon certainly reflects the age-old conflict of heroes with dragons, the battle between the soul and the body. But there is a further layer here: the serpent-like symbols of transformation with the notion of ultimate transformative power also converts the creature in the eyes of the mystic into "the dragon of freedom and detachment". Hence in the same manner as the serpent sloughs off its old skin and appears newly robed, the mystic annihilates his *nafs* and lives eternally by undergoing a metamorphosis. This is the transformation of the "animal soul" into a "soul at peace" (*nafs muṭma'inna*; Qur'ān 89:27).

By imitating the habits of wild animals, cohabitating with them and returning to the way of life of animals, potent transformative forces could thus be released. In so doing dervishes could divest themselves of their own animal self by emptying their skin of its animality. The boundaries of the body thereby served as a metaphor for a *qalandarī* "encoding" of an antinomian agenda which includes the withdrawal from social structures and controls. It is also expressed in unorthodox and illicit sexual behaviour, the transgression of sexual boundaries, and the active appropriation of characteristics associated with dead bodies in allusion to the principle of *fanā'* or "dying to self" which is implicit in the *ḥadīth* "to die before dying to the world" (*mūtū qabla an tamūtū*). To a certain extent this awesome and, at first sight, unbridled demeanour also reflects the notion that what is considered to be anomalous, shocking and marginal is at the same time the source of extraordinary power, or to quote Julia Kristeva, "the abject is edged with the sublime".[115] By providing an alternative to "socially domesticated Sufi paths",[116] eclectic groups of antinomian dervishes were engaged in a variety of very complex and idiosyncratic practices aimed at assisting the transformation of the animal soul as a pivotal part of the soul's journey towards its perfection.

List of abbreviations

The Encyclopaedia of Islam, second edition (*EI*^{2}). 1960–2009. Ed. H.A.R. Gibb…[et al.], Leiden: Brill; online edition. Accessed online September and October 2016.

The Encyclopaedia of Islam, third edition (*EI*^{3}). 2016. Eds Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson, Leiden: Brill; online edition. Accessed online September and October 2016.

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115 Kristeva 1982, p. 11.

116 Karamustafa [1994] 2006, p. 123.

Illustration

Fig. 1. Abdāl-i Rūm. After Nicolas de Nicolay: *Les navigations, pérégrinations et voyages faits en la Turquie par Nicolas de Nicolay*, Anvers: n.p., 1626, fol. 188. Photograph by courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF).

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